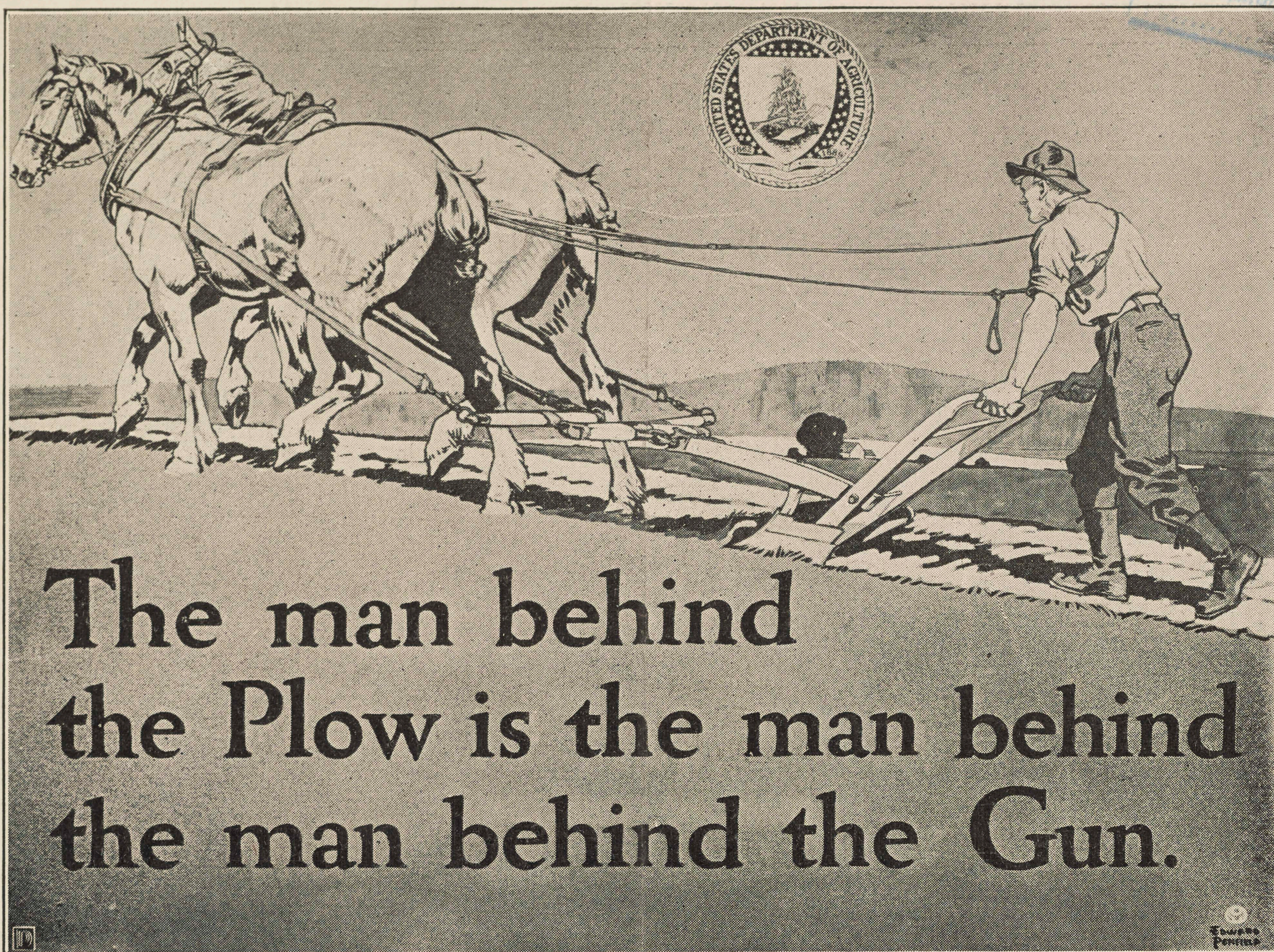


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TO THE PATRIOTS ON THE FARMS:

You are asked to undertake another offensive—to go “over the top” this fall for a great harvest of wheat in 1919. I need give only a few figures and facts to impress you with the increasing and urgent need of our people, our armies, the allied peoples and their armies for large supplies of American wheat.

Our reserve supply or carry-over from the 1917 crop is practically exhausted and is the smallest on record. The need of building up reserves of wheat is evident. Although this country produced a small crop of this grain in 1917, the total exports of wheat in excess of imports, including flour in terms of wheat, amounted to approximately 100,000,000 bushels for the year ending June 30, 1918. This is in comparison with 178,000,000 bushels exported in 1917, 236,000,000 bushels in 1916, and 331,000,000 bushels in 1915. It was possible for the United States to export wheat in large quantities in 1915 and 1916 only because of the large wheat crops of 1912-13-14-15, which gave this country an accumulation of stocks of this grain. Both the 1916 and 1917 crops were smaller than any crops since 1911 and besides this there was a greater demand for seed wheat and an increased population to be fed.

Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the carry-over in all the ten importing countries in Europe was practically exhausted this year before the new harvest; that the normal requirements of the exporting countries are increasing instead of diminishing; that some losses in storage and transit may be expected to continue; and that it is highly desirable that a surplus should be accumulated as insurance against partial crop failure next year.

You have been asked to sow to winter wheat this fall not less than 45,000,000 acres—an increase of 7 per cent over last year's sowing—and the Department has suggested that an even greater area, 47,500,000 acres, is desirable. The increased planting asked of each State has been carefully determined with regard to its local conditions and its reasonable capabilities. Your county agent can tell you the quota assigned to your State and you can apply the responsibility to your case.

You have occupied and do occupy the first line trenches of the food army. You have to fight difficulties too. I am not unmindful of these. In the Department of Agriculture we consider them daily, and daily we give our best efforts to help you meet them. You know of the difficulties in your community, but I know of them in many communities of many States, and so seriously do they impress me that I might almost consider them insurmountable had not American farmers last year, and again this year, revealed the true American fighting spirit and ability to meet serious situations. They will not let the war fail because of deficient food production.

Let us sow liberally for a big harvest in 1919. It has been called the Liberty Wheat Harvest. We all hope it will be. But let us undertake the task with the determination that we will sweat our blood for many more if need be before we yield one measure of our freedom to a Prussian domination. Let us fight in the furrows.

D. F. Houston

Secretary of Agriculture.